

nas.
ne,
ime!
Can never the poor be rich,
Though we wait till this life is o'er,
When they tell me we'll live once more,
Like my mother, who's gone before?

She looked so glad,
Who was always sad,
O! I'm sure she was poor no more.

Then listen, I pray,
To my Christmas lay,
You'll know if my tale is true;
For if Christ's come to-day,
As I've heard some say,
He's with gentlefolk like you.

* An old writer says—"Yet many of our beggar boys, whom we call *scatts*, seeking alms by playing and singing their Christmas Carols, so little understand the meaning thereof, that they are not much removed from heathen people."

The Housemaid's Plea for the Sabbath.

Oh ! there is never a day,
 When the weary may
 For a few short hours repose ;
 No time to be glad,
 No time to be sad,
 For our work cannot wait for our woes.
 But it's up in the morn,
 At early dawn,
 When the frost's on the window-pane ;
 And so late a-bed,
 In our dreams we dread
 That the dawn is upon us again.
 Day in, day out,
 We must work away,
 Forgive me ! You know what's best,
 Kind gentlemen, say,
 Can you spare us a day,
 But one short day of rest ?

With toil you nod
 In the house of God :
 We'd work for you, sirs, and pray ;
 But you've closed the door,
 Lest the knees of the poor
 Might tarnish your cushions gay ;
 For it's up in the morn,
 At early dawn,
 When the frost's on the window-pane ;
 And so late a-bed,
 In our dreams we dread,
 That the dawn is upon us again.
 Day in, day out,
 We must work away ;
 Though they tell us, " what is, is best,"
 Just Heaven, oh may
 You send us a day,
 One long, long day of rest !

The Rich Man's Christmas.

"Now too is heard
The hapless cripple tuning through the streets
His carol new, and oft amid the gloom
Of midnight hours prevails the accustomed sound
Of wakeful wails."—"Christmas,"—a Poem.

Oh! I wish I were rich!
Though 'twere only at Christmas time,
When the bells so joyously chime;
They surely must know my rhyme,
So gladly they sing,
With their ding dong ding,
How they dance to the Christmas chime!
Then listen I pray
To my Christmas lay,
You'll know if my tale is true;
For if Christ's come to-day,
As I've heard some say,
He's with gentlefolk like you.

What, he made you rich!
He bidding you now rejoice!
Oh, how you must love his voice,
And bless him that you're his choice!
How we'd sing, could we meet
Him here in the street,
Who is bidding the rich rejoice!
Then listen, I pray,
To my Christmas lay,
You'll know if my tale is true,
For if Christ's come to-day,
As I've heard some say,
He's with gentlefolk like you!

Oh! I wish I were rich,
Though to-morrow I'm poor again!
How I'd comfort all grief and pain,
They never should moan in vain,
Through this livelong day
I'd sing without pay,
Though to-morrow I'm poor again.
Then listen, I pray,
To my Christmas lay,
You'll know if my tale is true;
For if Christ's come to-day,
As I've heard some say,
He's with gentlefolk like you.

That vision has passed,
Thank God, at last,
Away from her agony!
As they raised her head,
And thought she was dead,
So pallid and cold was she,
She woke with a gaze
Of strange amaze,
And she spoke, but her words were wild;
Her thoughts seemed to roam
To a distant home,
To a love still undefiled.
She had entered in,
A woman of sin,
But she left that cell, a child.

On, on through the streets!
From all whom she meets,
She asks for her wedded spouse;
Unheard on her ear
Fell the jest and the jeer,
As she spoke of her bridal vows;
And her raven hair
Waved loose in the air,
Like a hovering shade of night;
Men wondering saw
The dress that she wore,
'Twas a bridal dress of white.
"This morn we were wed,
Oh! why has he fled
Forever from my sight?"

* * * * *

Her search is o'er
For evermore
Death's bride, unshrived, unwed!
Some scoffed, and some saw,
As they gazed in awe,
That the Lord was with the dead.
He has come, we know,
To this child of woe,—
Come down from the realms of light;
And the eyes, that were seen
O'er the Magdalene
To weep, have wept this night.
Ah! not in vain,
Through the blood of the slain,
She is clad in a robe of white.

Health of the people
with the health of the

VOICES FROM THE STREET.

&c.

By R. G. HALIBURTON.

[Printed for Private Circulation.]

VOICES FROM THE STREET.

I.

*The Baptism of Blood.**

"What are these who are arrayed in white robes,
and whence come they?"

Was it a dream,
That stifled scream?
Her heart refused to beat;
And her brain, it burned,
As her eyes she turned
To the dead man at her feet.
Oh God! that sight!
In the flickering light,
A bloody corpse lay there,
On the trickling gore,
That clotted the floor,
She gazed, with a dazed stare,
Till a crimson flood
Of human blood
Seemed surging everywhere;
And she shuddering fled
From the ghastly dead,
But the blood was everywhere.

Still, still that sound!
In her cell, from the ground
It echoed evermore,
(Why could not his cry,
With the dead man, die!)
While under the iron door,
There followed her still
A trickling rill,
That covered the walls of stone,
As the horrid tide
Rose up by her side,
With many a bubbling moan,
Till she shrieked in despair,
And gasped for air,
But she struggled, and sank alone.

* The incidents here alluded to are literally true, as many persons in Halifax are aware. An unfortunate woman, who was, some years ago, indicted as an accessory to a murder, of which she was an unwilling spectator, was so affected by the horrible scene she had witnessed, that she lost her reason. Fancying she had been recently married to a person to whom she was attached in early life, and dressed in white, she wandered over the Province, searching for him—imagining that she had been accidentally separated from him.

The Wounded Heart.

THROUGH the thick brake, and leafy covert flying,
The wounded bird,
With fluttering wings, amid the hemlocks sighing,
Afar is heard.
Vainly it strives, as death life's tide is drinking,
To wing its way :
While he, who sped the shaft, knows not that, sinking
To earth, his prey
Flutters, and sobs, unseen, its fainting life away.

Ah! thus in vain from haunts of men retreating,
Oh wounded heart!
Thou fain wouldst soothe, in solitude, thy beating
Within the dart
Is fastened. None may see it. He may never,
Who wronged thee so,
Read with cold eyes the ceaseless love, that ever
Conceals its woe;
And flees, yet hugs more close, the shaft that laid it
low.

The Dying Words of the Old Year.

TOLL not, for the dying year!
Ring out a merry chime;
Bury thy dead, oh time!
It is done;
Let none
Toll for the dying year.

But I heard a voice on the midnight air :
"Hear not in vain,
My parting words. Mortal prepare!
We meet again."

Yet England's humble sons, though in their heart
 Grief reigns supreme, while joy and hope depart,
 Seek for a crust—for life, but not by wrong;
 They mock grim famine by a joyous song.
 Where shall they turn for aid? To those rich hoards
 Which cotton's King has gained for cotton Lords?
 In vain! Too oft their Lordships turn away;
 They'd gladly give, if pity would but pay.
 Ah! was it wise, when for the lust of gain,
 England forgot her sons beyond the main;
 Held foes as friends, and friends as foes; for they,
 In trade, are *dearest*, who *most dearly* pay.
 'Tis not when sunshine glads our joyous path,
 But when misfortune's storm, in deadly wrath,
 Bursts o'er our heads, the proverb's truth we know,
 "Blood's thicker far than water." In his woe,
 The friends of commerce shun the falling man,
 While kinsmen strive to save him if they can!
 Where shall old England find the pitying tear,
 'Mid trade's old allies, or mid kinsmen near?
 Turn to the South with England's riches clad,
 Or to the North, the mart for good and bad,
 Whate'er she deigns to sell them? No! Disdain
 Hurls, at her woes, its insults o'er the main:
 But her forgotten sons, from pole to pole,
 From East to West, with but a simple dole,
 Though poor, give richly of their humble store,
 And long for wealth, that they might offer more;
 Feel all her woes, as if her woes were near,
 And give the honest tribute—of a tear.
 A truce to this! Though far our thoughts would
 roam,
 We know that "charity begins at home."
 We'll need all yours to-night: You can't do less,
 Than kindly judge our TRIBUTE TO DISTRESS.

Oct. 1862.

Sound Growned.

"Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurried—
Any where, any where
Out of the world."

—*Bridge of Sighs.*

SUMMER had fled. The autumn tints no more
Could mock the dying forests. Dull decay
Sat brooding o'er the sombre earth. The sky,
Grown strangely drear, its azure mantle doffed
For sad attire. Over the red sun rolled,
Like wintry seas, clouds leaden hued, that merged
The darkening heaven. The fitful wind awoke
Moaning, as if from troubled dreams. The leaves,
Like sitting spirits of past summer joys,
Danced in the fleecy air, then sank to sleep
In winter's cold embrace; while o'er the scene
The floating snow its pallid mantle flung,
Until the town's dark roofs, the sombre firs,
The russet barrens crimson-flecked, grown pale,
Fast faded from the view; and all once more
Seemed pure, as when the infant earth first woke,
And wond'ring watched the dawn—save where black lakes
Drank up the trembling snow flakes as they fell
Unnumbered, and still turned unto the sky
Their greedy gaze, like monsters of the deep,
That lurk amid the ocean's foam, and watch
With ever hungry eyes. Then jealous night,
That with her shadowy mantle, from the day
Slow veils the wearied, slumbering earth, in haste,
As if she feared a fairer rival, rushed
Upon the tempest's wings. At intervals,
"All's well!" was borne upon the fitful gusts,
That eddying swept the silent streets. The cry
Seemed to excite the storm's wild revelry;
And the snow madly whirled o'er hill and dale,
Far over surging forests and bleak plains,
Wreathing with hoary crown the writhing pines
That strove with their tormentor, and in sport
Wrestling with oaks that struggled in its arms,
And groaned unheard. Again with muffled tones
"All's well!" the watchman cried, and shiv'ring saw
A form that struggled with the deep'ning snow,
And wearily plunged on amid the drifts.
He started, as he marked the sullen glare
That lit her sunken eye, the recklessness
That dared the wintry tempest. She passed by;
The wind still howled, and still the mocking sound
"All's well!" re-echoed through the lagging hours.

* * * * *

v.
The Beggar at the Church Door.

"Come buy without money and without price."

All day long by the door, aweary,
Door that I may not enter in,
Here I must watch through the Sabbath dreary,
Until the shadows of night begin.

Your charity, kind sir!

Before you go in to pray,

For you know what the curates say,
"Who gives to the poor he gives to God;"
It must be true; but it seems to me odd,
If he loves us so much, as the curates say,
His house has no place where the poor can pray.

List to their praise for wealth and gladness!

Oh! I dare not venture in;

Bless him for hunger and pain! 'Twere mad-
ness;

Mock him by rags! 'Twould be a sin.

Your charity, kind sir!

Before you go in to pray,

For you know what the curates say,
"Who gives to the poor he gives to God;"
It must be true; but it seems to me odd,
If he loves us so much, as the curates say,
His house has no place where the poor can pray.

Hark! we can come without price or paying—
Come where? To the pews where the rich man
prays?

'Twould cost me full more for a Sunday's pray-
ing,

Than I'd ever beg to the end of my days.

Your charity kind sir!

Before you go in to pray,

For you know what the curates say,
"Who gives to the poor he gives to God."
It must be true; but it seems to me odd,
If he loves us so much, as the curates say,
His house has no place where the poor can pray.

The Pharisee and the Sinner.

"I thank thee, I am not as other people are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican."

Why shrink back with fear, as you pass so near
To a tattered form like mine?

Why piously raise your eyes from my gaze?
I've a prouder soul than thine.

They tell me you've wed an old gray head,
(How brightly your jewels shine!)
That your hand you have sold, for your price it
was gold;
I've a prouder soul than thine.

Yet all your life, you must seem his wife;
Smile on, though your heart repine!
Loathe every kiss of your wedded bliss!
I've a prouder soul than thine.

God knows us both! Even I would be loath
To sell me for lands so fine,
By a lifelong lie. We must pay, when we buy;
I've a prouder soul than thine.

My brow is so bold, my tale you've been told,
Though dimly the gas lamps shine;
Let me hug my despair, in the cold night air;
I've a prouder soul than thine!

You spurn me, and praise kind heaven, your
ways
Are holier than mine;
Yet you scorn me in vain. In my hunger and
pain,
I've a prouder soul than thine.

Oh love! oh fate! I was no fit mate
Mid the gentle folk to shine,
So whate'er might betide, I stifled my pride;
I've a prouder soul than thine.

Yet blame him not for my hapless lot!
He'd have lowered his ancient line,
Had I loved like thee. He humbled by me!
I've a prouder soul than thine.

Belshazzar's Feast.

'THOU art a god,' they said. He rose
Maddened with wine and flushed with pride;
He raised the sacred chalice high,
And, laughing, pledged the ruby tide;
Then, mocking, held the empty bowl
That he had reft from Judah's fane:
'A god drinks not from common gold;
The Hebrews made this not in vain.'
'In vain!' that word of scorn his last!
None recked the wine-cup as it fell;
While, statue-like, their monarch stood,
Bound by a sudden, silent spell.
He gazed, as in some fearful dream,
That lord of Eastern sea and land;
He strove to speak; his quiv'ring lips
Could only gasp, 'That hand! that hand!'—
That hand of flame! he saw it write;
All else grew dim within the room:
He felt its fiery fingers scar
Deep on his heart his damning doom.
That hand wrote not in vain. At morn
None kneeled to hail the sacred dawn,*
Unseen the Sun, 'mid clouds of fire
That rose to heaven from Nimroud's pyre.
Where were the banqueters? O where?
The blackened walls alone were there.
Amid that sea of flames they stood,
Like grim rocks battling with a flood.
And where Belshazzar? Ask the few
Who lived to tell where deadliest grew
The strife—where brightest were the gleams
Of falchions—where the loudest screams
Of terror thrilled the midnight air,
Lost in the curses of despair;
There, smold'ring in one fiery grave,
Lay Nimroud's monarch with the slave.

* The Chaldeans, in common with all fire-worshippers, adored the rising sun, a superstition still observable throughout Asia.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

Prologue,

Delivered at a theatrical performance on behalf of the distressed Lancashire operatives.

WHAT sounds are these? The horrid din of war
Comes on mine ear, reechoing from afar!
Brothers, with brothers; Sires with sons at strife!
Can nations wear the mark Cain wore for life?
Each armed host, for empty forms of air,—
Five hundred thousand each, are marshalled there,
A million, all—of hope and life possessed;
How many doomed to find too soon their rest;
Their glory in a nameless grave, while high
Will grow rank verdure o'er mortality!
'Tis sad: but sadder still, the task is vain,
To win by arms the warm South back again;
O'er law to ride, that law may be supreme,
And freedom lose, to triumph in a dream.
Soon, at this rate, the wond'ring world will see
The whites in bonds, the blacks alone the free.
'Tis said a dame, who in her morning walk
Saw her pet Shanghai mangled by a hawk—
Rushed to the rescue, bore him from the strife;
And killed the fowl, *to save the poor thing's life!*
'Tis thus our friends, from fear of dissolution,
Have killed the State to save its constitution!
Hark! Is it fancy brings the sound so near—
The wail of grief that falls upon my ear?
Not the wild cry of battle and despair,
Where death's dim eyes still wear the horrid glare
Of dying hate! No! sadder, though so low,
Comes the deep sobbing of a nation's woe.
See the strange scene! Where busy looms of yore,
With thousand iron hands, heaped up the store
Of England's wealth, now all is still and drear.
Those iron hands are palsied. Far and near
Gaunt, famished crowds in thousands seek for bread,
And long for toll, where labor's life has fled.
In vain they seek! They roam the streets along,
And strive to buy our pity by a song;
Quaint homely songs, in homely tones, they sing.
'Tis all they've left, and all they have they bring.
Her victors mourned, when Judah in her chains,
By Nimroud's stream, was asked to sing the strains
Of far-off Zion,—strains whose every tone
But made her lonely exile doubly lone.
How could she sing? Could she her bonds forget?
Tears mocked her song. She bowed her down and
wept;

I saw you lay your needles down
And silent muse awhile,
Then joyfu' marked your sadness fade
And vanish in a smile.

Puir simple lad ! I most believed—
Aye, auld though now I be,
I dream your thoughts were answering mine,
And that you smiled on me;

I dream I stand, as then I stood,
On tiptoe peeping through
The window o' Glenallen Manse,
To get a blink o' you.

Though fifty summers hae gane by,
I've ne'er fergotten thee;
Through mony a year that pensive face
And sunny smile I see;

That sunny smile once more, when a'
The world's at rest, appears;
Once more we're bairns, till memory fades
And fills my e'e wi' tears.

Folks clash and say, my gowd's my a';
Sin' well to do I be,
I'm sic a crabbit lonesome man,
None kindly think o' me;

And that this hard heart cannot luv,
That luv's thee still sae weel,
And hoards mair close than a' my gowd,
The last blink o' thyself.

I own I feel 'tis foolish noo;
Ye maun like me be auld:
Ye may hae died and never ken't
The tale I never told.

Thou mayst be changed, as I am changed;
Time may hae dimmed thine e'e;
Thou mayst be noo a wrinkled dame,
Thou'rt still a bairn to me.

Still, still to thee my spirit yearns,
Tho' furrowed is my brow,
And lang, lang years hae passing shed
Their white anaws o'er my pow;

Though age has bent me, as the birk
Bends to the bleak Nor' blast,
And could, sae could this heart has grown
Sin' I hae seen thee last.

Of misty clouds, the stars peeped out,
And saw no form amid the darkened deep,
Save their own image. And the Pleiades,
Clasped in each others arms, mused mournfully
Upon Earth's erring daughter, and recalled
Their own lost sister, that had strayed and fallen
From mid her kindred stars. And now the frost,
Breathing upon the stream, with silent chains
Stole o'er its waves, and in their ice-bound depths
Long held the wearied sleeper; and when months
Had rolled upon their course, and the warm winds
Of Spring had loosed the waters, a pale form
Was borne far on their bosom, and was laid
By strangers' hands within a nameless grave;
But still the vacant chair, that once was hers,
Is placed beside the hearth; and still the prayer
Is breathed for her, the loved one and the lost.

They slumbered on, till the waters fell;
Then earth appeared once more,
And their lotus barks were stranded left,
Upon Lakdiwa's[†] shore.
There was no sun to guide them there;
No stars appeared in sight,
But the rays of heaven around them streamed,
And the Dewas' path was light.
Where'er they went, the daylight came;
When'er they left, 'twas night.

Wild with delight, they roamed afar,
Oh, the newborn earth was fair!
Ah! little they dreamed, as they wreathed its
flowers,

And drank up its odorous air,
A change was stealing o'er their forms,
They were breathing lust, and hate;
Alas! that folly was learned so soon,
And wisdom learned so late!
Burning with new born wild desires,
They longed for food—and ate.

They ate, alas! and were gods no more.
They felt their radiance fade;
And the darkness gathered o'er their heads,
In a deep'ning murky shade,
That shut from their eyes Nirwana's[§] gates.
Too late they strove to fly;
Their idle pinions long before
Had dropped from their wings. The sky
Could only be reached through the gates of the
grave;

They first must learn to die.

Then they trembling raised a wail of grief,
So loud, that to heaven it rose,
Where each long lost Dewa's voice was heard
Mourning its human woes.
Though the Gods gazed down through the view-
less void,

They wept, and watched in vain
For those wand'ring lights; their glimmering
rays

Were never more seen again.
But the gods still mourn for the Dewas lost;
And their tears are the drops of rain.

* The lotus, a species of lily, was a sacred emblem not only in ancient Egypt, but also throughout the whole of Asia. Its use as a secret symbol of revolt among the Sepoys, will be remembered by the reader.

† A demigod—or subordinate Deity.

‡ Ceylon.

§ Heaven, or paradise.

The Angel and the Child.

[From the German of Friedlgrath.]

Was it eve's last ray? A spirit
O'er an infant softly beamed;
Dimly gleaming, like an image
In a fountain's depths, it seemed.

"Come, oh angel child!" it whispered,
"Fly to endless light with me!
Earth has naught that it can offer,
Come! It is not worthy thee.

Bloom not here to meet with sorrow,
Where false joys will gall thy heart!
Pleasures here are tinged with sadness;
Mid thy smiles the tear will start.

Wails will mingle with the revel,
Few bright days can cheer thy path;
Soon black clouds must shroud the heavens,
Whirling in the tempest's wrath.

Ah! that grief should e'er sit brooding
On that calm and peaceful brow;
And that bitter tears should darken
Eyes so bright and joyous now!

No! come follow where I'll lead thee,
Where bright suns eternal roll!
Days, which there will be so happy,
Here too soon, will grieve thy soul.

Wait not then! for tears are waiting
Thee and all the sons of earth;
Smiling ever, joyous fly hence,
Smile in death, as at thy birth!

Let thy star, which rose so brightly,
Brightly guide thee to thy rest.
To earth's sons, that sinless leave her,
Life's last moments are its best."

Thus it spake; and on its pinions,
Heavenward soaring, in its flight,
Bore the glad soul to its Saviour,
Warbling notes of sweet delight.

And the mother saw the infant
Smiling, as its spirit fled;
Long she watched and rocked her darling,
Ere she dreamed that it was dead.

The Parting Blink.

THE following lines were suggested, by a friend, the executor of an old hard-fisted hard hearted money-making Scotch emigrant, finding to his surprise, on looking over the papers of the deceased, that, unsuspected by the world, there had lingered a sunny spot in a heart, that had long been steeled against human sympathies and affection.

O H! Ally Deane, tho' mony a line
Is deep'ning on my brow,
And lang, lang years hae passing shed
Their white snaws o'er my pow;

Though age has bent me, as the birk
Bends to the bleak Nor' blast,
And could, so could this heart has grown,
Sin' I hae seen thee last;

I've ne'er forgot where aft we met,
Twa bairnies baith, while I
Skulked truant frae the weary schule
To see thee passing by.

I thought—'twas but a childish dream—
The sun beamed safter then;
The lazy winds frae sleep awoke,
And murmured through the glen;

More sweet the gowan breathed, the notes
Of throistles louder grew,
All, all seemed greeting you, save one,
Wha daurns speak to you.

My cheeks brent red, I scarce knew why;
My heart beat hard and sair:
Ye heard it not—nor knew the flame,
That burned sae wildly there.

Yet ere I left my ain dear land,
To cross the stormy sea,
I stole aboon the burn to look,
Unken't to a', at thee.

The bleesin' ingle cheered the glen;
I watched you knitting there:
Oh! by that gladsome gleaming fire
I'll see thee evermair!

The Fall of the Angels.

The account of the origin of sin, the fall of the angels, and the creation of the human race, in the Buddha Guadma's Doctrine (see *Up-ham's Mahawanse*, vol. 3, p. 155), is one of the most beautiful traditions on the subject, to be found in the whole range of classical or Oriental literature. Compared with it, the legends of the Vedas and the Sagas, and the fables of Hesiod, Lucretius, and Ovid, are rude and grotesque. It has never been before selected; it is believed, as a subject for English poetry, a circumstance that may be explained by the immense preponderance of the most puerile absurdities in the sacred books of the Singhalese Buddhists. The name of one of the chapters *Garomenecoomaure-sooty* (C) and the mention of the 16,000 wives of the amatory king *Dootoogameny*, are enough to deter the most adventurous from any enquiry into so unpromising a field. The belief in sin having been caused by the use of food, and in the sons of God having come down to earth, points to the same primeval traditions which are preserved in sacred writ.

High o'er the deluged earth, the tide
Rose up from the realms of night,
Till the waters danced at the golden gates,
And joyously hailed the light;
And the lotus* gleamed on the murky waves,
As pure as the drops of snow,
So fair, that the Dewas† wond'ring gazed
On these waifs from the world below,
And longed to seek for that unknown land,
Where the fragrant lilies grow.

Then they bade farewell to heaven, and made
Each lotus cup their bark;
And their rays lit up the sunless void,
As stars, when the moon is dark.
Like an infant clasped to its mother's breast,
As they floated o'er the deep,
They drank long draughts of the lilies' breath.
Till they felt earth's odors steep
Their senses in strange drowsy dreams;
Then they wondering sank to sleep.

The wind may rage without, yet round the hearth
More closely draws the group. The merry chirp
That cheers the farmer's fireside, is heard
More blithely tuning its shrill melody,
As though it strives with feeble strain, to vie
With the loud moaning wind. Absorbed and still,
A child, with wonder in its earnest eyes,
Hears oft-told tales beside its grand-dame's knee.
Absent, and gazing on the glimmering fire,
The father silent sits; yet oft he steals
A tearful look at the long-vacant chair,
That none is there to occupy, and oft
The maidens, all their mirth, lest it may break
His mournful reverie. At length the clock
Reminds him of the hour for prayer; then low
He bows in supplication, and leads on
The answering group of youthful worshippers;
Now asking heaven for blessings on the head
Of those that journey far o'er land and sea,
And in compassion to earth's erring ones,
"To raise up them that fall"; but no voice adds,
Responsively, "Amen." With breathings hushed,
Each wondering strives to catch once more the sound
Of the deep groan, that brought their prayer-winged thoughts
From heaven to earth again. They listen long:
Hark! now it comes once more. — the moan
Of the complaining wind. Again
To urge the earnest prayer, and
For each around a blessing from on high;
And now his deep voice trembling breathes the name
Of one who is not there, when shrinking close
To its fond mother's breast, the frightened child,
Hiding its face, in silent terror points
At the strange eyes, that, wildly gazing in,
Glare through the snow-wreathed window.
All look up, and see a haggard, startled face recede,
And vanish in the darkness. From his knees
The father wildly rushes 'mid the storm,
And seeks the wanderer. In vain! The snow
Whirling in chilling wreaths, shuts out the view,
And blinds his eager gaze. He calls her name,
And fondly bids her welcome back again;
But list'ning hears no answer, save the voice
Of the rude blast that raises up on high
Its howl of mockery. Now when a lull
Comes o'er the tempest's breathings, he again
Wastes his wild cries upon the muffled air;
The dulled tones soon, unheard, are drowned beneath
The rising surges of the wind. He sighs,
And silent, long he doubts: "It is not she,
So frail! so gentle! She could never brave.

A night like this, when even the forest beasts
Shrink shiv'ring to their deepest lairs. Oh, no!
It was a waking dream. The name we breathed,
Has conjured our lost loved-one back again;
Or she is not, and her poor spirit seeks
The home of early innocence." He marks
That all around him seemed to strive with death.
The hemlocks shudder 'neath their snowy shroud,
As though they mourn earth's wintry sleep; the fir
Rock to and fro, as though they feel his grief,
And 'wall the hapless wraith. Reluctantly
He homeward turns his lingering steps; yet oft
He pauses on his way to gaze again
Through the thick night. Again he wildly calls
Her name, then listens to the forest din.
As the trees battle with the storm. At length
He slowly shuts the door. The drifting sleet
Beats on the frozen windows, and the wind
Still sings its ceaseless dirge.

None heed the form,
That struggles down the narrow path, and stops
Where the black stream moves silently along
Beneath the forest's bending boughs; none hear
A voice, that mingled with the forest's wail,
Now raised aloft to heaven, now sinking low
Into a murmuring sigh.

"This is the spot!
I know it well. . Fit resting place for me:
I'll lay my load of sin and sorrow here;
And from life's heavy chains at length shall burst,
And free my wearied spirit. Here at length
I'll cease to think—to be. No more I'll sue
For slumber's sweet forgetfulness in vain!
Oh cruel sleep, thou partial visitor!
Unasked thy drowsy wings are wont to fan
Joy's lazy lids, yet shun the aching eyes
Of waking misery. A heaven art thou
To wearied souls, whose hell has been on earth.
I will not wait thy wooing, but will burst
Into thy home of endless dreams; no more
Shalt thou escape me; I will hug thee close
Forever to my longing breast. I come!
Welcome, sweet sleep!"

* * * * *
The waters closed around
And silently flowed onward. And the wind
Stilled its loud breathings, as though fain to hear
The breaking heart throb 'neath the agony
Of dissolution, and the fevered pulse
Beat wildly, as if struggling to elude
Death's cold, congealing hand. Beneath the veil

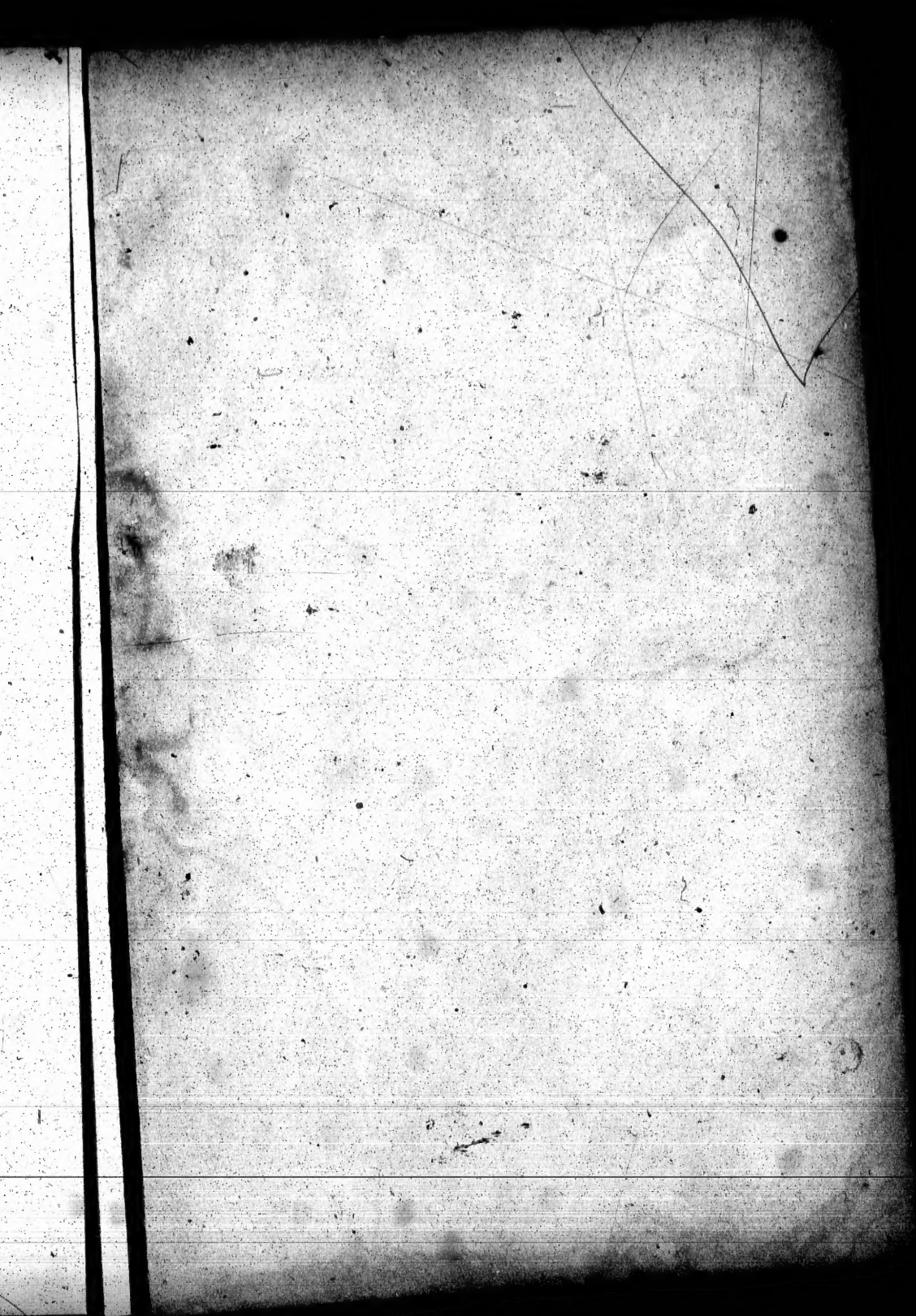
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